

ENGLISH AS RESOURCE: RUIZ (1984) IN THE NEOLIBERAL CANADIAN UNIVERSITY



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Who am I?

PRACTITIONER-RESEARCHER

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Presentation Outline

ENGLISH AS RESOURCE: RUIZ (1984) IN THE NEOLIBERAL CANADIAN UNIVERSITY

- Ruiz (1984) and Hult and Hornberger (2016)
- My study: Monolingualism, Neoliberalism and Language-as-Problem: Discourse Itineraries in Canadian University Language Policy
- A new tool: The Continuum of Language-as-Problem
- Application of this tool in Canadian HE

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**RUIZ, RICHARD. 1984.
ORIENTATIONS IN LANGUAGE PLANNING.**

Google Scholar: Cited by 2324



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Three Orientations

"Basic orientations toward language and its role in society influence the nature of language planning efforts in any particular context."

LANGUAGE AS PROBLEM

Monolingualism in a dominant, majority language as the norm; speaking another language is a problem to overcome

LANGUAGE AS RIGHT

Linguistic inequities addressed via legal mechanisms

LANGUAGE AS RESOURCE

Multilingualism is valued both on a societal and individual level; languages have intrinsic value and extrinsic value



Revisiting orientations in language planning: Problem, right, and resource as an analytical heuristic

HULT, F. M., &
HORNBERGER, N. H. (2016)

- Inventory of the fundamental characteristics or (pre)dispositions of each of the 3 orientations + key questions
- Link Ruiz's "orientations" to discourses
- "Inventory of (pre)dispositions and questions that together can aid in the deductive analysis of policy texts, curricular documents, media sources, and participant statements, among other kinds of discourse data."
- *Emic* use in "situations where people express their beliefs about language"

Three Orientations Beyond US Bilingual Ed

CANADA

- Multilingualism in primary and secondary public education (Krasny & Sachar, 2017)
- Language-as-right orientation in federal English–French bilingualism (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996),
- Indigenous languages (Blair, Pelly & Starr, 2018)
- Heritage language maintenance (Cummins, 1992).
- Higher education and internationalization (Miranda, 2018)
- Translanguaging in Canadian HE (Burton & Rajendram, 2019).

HIGHER ED

- Language policy and availability of HE in Florida (Roca, 1999)
- Language-as-Resource at a Danish university (Holmen, 2015)
- UK HE (Preece & Martin, 2009)
- Language-as-Resource in multilingual research students in Australia (Liu, 2016)
- Translanguaging in multilingual Puerto Rico (Carroll & Morales, 2016)

Monolingualism, Neoliberalism and Language-as-Problem: Discourse Itineraries in Canadian University Language Policy



CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF POLICY

- Multiple case study of three Canadian universities
- Mapped changing and conflicting “discourse itineraries” (Scollon, 2008, p. 234) in institutional language policy
- Critical discourse analysis of policy documents and interviews related to language, academic literacy and internationalization
- Macro and meso levels (Provincial, institutional and faculty levels)

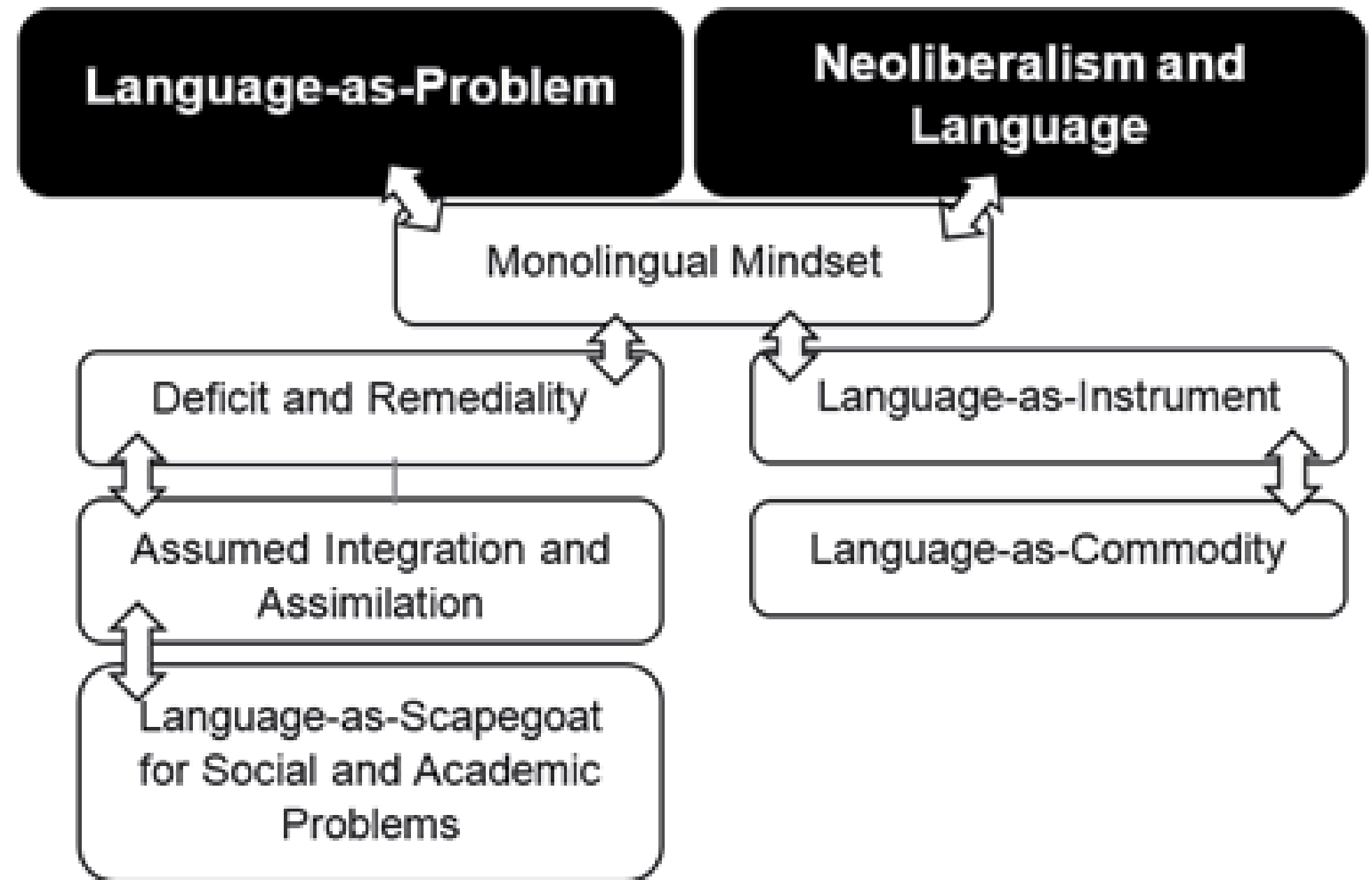
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- To what extent is language visible in Canadian university language policy?
- What are the Discourses at play in the construction of the "English language problem" as a policy problem?
- What Discourses are present in Canadian university language policy?

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MAPPING THE DISCOURSES

What were the prominent policy discourses at these three institutions?



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Continuum of Language-as-Problem

Adapting Ruiz (1984) to today's Canadian Higher Ed

DOMINANT MONOLINGUAL MINDSET

- Language is invisible
- Linguistic diversity not acknowledged
- English language and academic literacy practically absent from policy and practice in general
- **Alternative title: Ignore Language**

LANGUAGE AS PROBLEM

- English language and academic literacy for those from non-English-speaking backgrounds is a problem that must be solved
- Policies and practices addressing English language and literacy are adjunctive, marginal, extra-curricular
- **Alternative title: Blame Language**

ENGLISH AS ECONOMIC RESOURCE

- Between language-as-problem and language-as-resource
- Acceptance of the centrality of English language and academic literacy in the curriculum for all students
- **Alternative title: Support the English Language**

LANGUAGE AS RESOURCE

- Multilingualism is valued and promoted for all students (not just those from non-English-speaking backgrounds)
- Languages have intrinsic and extrinsic value for a variety of purposes
- **Alternative title: Embrace Language**

English as Economic Resource

Support the English Language



ENGLISH, NEOLIBERALISM AND HIGHER ED

- The university = training for the labour market
- The objective of higher education is no longer to benefit society or individuals' intellectual development, but to increase students' value to the economy as skilled workers
- Hegemony of English for global business, science and technology and academic research (Holborow, 2015)
- Focus on "communication skills" (Cameron, 2002); not knowledge, but training; driven by intense economic competition.

ENGLISH UNDER NEOLIBERALISM IN CANADIAN HE

- Language-as-Economic-Instrument
- Language-as-Commodity: language is seen as a resource with market or exchange value (Heller, 2010)
- Examples:
 - "Communication skills" in macro-level graduate outcomes
 - Institutional working groups on "communication skills"
 - Writing Centres adding a "communication skills" to their mandate
 - Co-op program employers influencing institutional language policies

Applying this Heuristic

USES FOR RESEARCHERS AND PRACTITIONERS

- In research: both *etic* and *emic* uses (Hult and Hornberger, 2016)
- In practice:
 - Language policy is dispersed across the university; language stakeholders are many and varied
 - Neoliberalism is “the common sense way many of us interpret, live in and understand the world” (Harvey, 2005, p. 3, as cited in Holborow, 2015, p. 1)
 - Can "make visible" discourses/orientations guiding their practice, via self-study, committees, policy development, curricular design, etc.



Thank You!

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